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40 UNDER 40

Melissa Roy, 36

- **Biggest achievement:** Working to assemble the **Detroit Regional Chamber's** Translinked initiative.
- **Current goal:** Help Macomb County achieve a greater recognition of its assets and be a bigger player in changing regional dynamics.

For Melissa Roy, taking a job with Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel was a chance to reconnect with her roots. Roy grew up in Macomb County, attending L'Anse Creuse schools.

After graduating from the **University of Michigan** with degrees in economics and German, Roy joined the **Detroit Regional Chamber** after a brief stint at a chamber of commerce in Germany.

She spent 12 years at the chamber, working first in economic development, then in lobbying and public affairs.

That's where she met Hackel.

"Mark Hackel came in for an interview with the chamber — we were doing endorsements for (the 2010) election year, and we got to talking about Macomb County," Roy said. "When he was looking for a government relations and public policy person ... it worked out well. We had similar theories on public policy and politics."

She joined the county in February, an interesting change in perspective.

"The nice thing is, similar to the policy or the political view of the chamber, there was a bigger focus on policy and getting things done and doing things the right way," she said.

"I think Mark and the rest of the administration have that same focus. That's what was so appealing. Mark and the other guys in the office really wanted to focus on doing the right thing and getting things done for Macomb County and being the right fit in the region; coming from the chamber, it was very appealing, the career goal was appealing as well, and it is my political profile as well."

Roy said a key part of her mission is to help Macomb gain a level of regional influence on par with its growth and other offerings.

"Very often we've gotten into a position in the region where there's a stalemate or we don't get things done because we can't agree on a common solution," she said.

"Out of all the three counties (in metro Detroit), Macomb County had a tremendous increase in population over the last three years, and that's a tribute to what the county offers — affordable housing, good schools, great neighborhoods, great opportunities — and we want to continue to provide that. And we want to make sure the county is tied in with the rest of region. Very often Macomb County feels it is left out of the discussion, but with (the newly instituted) executive form of government, we have a seat at the table we didn't have before."